

CHAPTER 1

DIVERSITY, EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSION

MONDAY MORNING, 6:10 A.M.

Kathaleen awoke with a start. Glancing over at the clock, she realized that she had overslept, again. Either Kathaleen had not heard the alarm or it was no longer working. She had no time to consider this problem right now, however. It was 6:10 and she was running late. Kathaleen jumped out of bed, grabbed some clothes and ran to the bathroom. After a two-minute shower, she dressed, brushed her hair, slapped on some make-up and stepped over the ever-present and quickly growing laundry pile into the hall. She tiptoed past her sons' bedrooms, smiling to herself as she did so. She knew that her two teenagers could sleep through a bomb blast at this time of the morning, so her stealth was really not needed. But old habits and motherly instincts die hard, and she could not help but try to be as quiet as possible. Kathaleen only hoped that the boys would rise in time to make it to school before the morning bell. She was becoming increasingly concerned with their tardiness of late. One or the other failed to make it to school on time on three occasions last week. She felt a twinge of guilt, and wished she could see them off to school every morning. But alas, this would never be. Her job precluded such things.

Kathaleen was principal of Althaven Secondary School and well into her second year in this position. She was no stranger to administration. Before this appointment she had been principal of another high school in the more northerly reaches of the board. In the years prior to this Kathaleen held a series of vice-principalships, all of them in secondary schools in this district. She had come into administration from teaching, as had all of her principal colleagues. Many lifetimes ago, or so it seemed to Kathaleen, she had been a Math teacher, one of a handful of women in this area in the entire board. She had never seriously considered a career in administration when she was teaching. Yet her second principal had seen promise in her, and he had gone out of his way to encourage Kathaleen to pursue an administrative path. He had pleaded with her to apply for the Math headship when it became available, and later to the vice-principal pool. Kathaleen was convinced that her mentor played a decisive role in her getting the headship and her first vice-principal position. After that, Kathaleen hadn't needed a champion to help her acquire subsequent positions. She worked hard and she was good at what she did. These days, however, there were times when she seriously questioned whether she was suited to this job.

She had no time for a sit-down breakfast – not that there ever was in the morning. Kathaleen threw on a coat, slipped into some shoes and opened the door to the

garage. She navigated her way around the heaps of bikes, skis, hoses, lawnmowers, shovels and just plain junk and hopped into her five-year old Toyota Corolla. It roared to life as it always did when she turned the key. At least there was one thing in her life she could be sure about these days, she thought. Her satisfaction was short-lived, however, as she glanced at the gas gauge and noticed that the indicator was pointing to empty. She howled in frustration as she remembered that Bob, her eldest, had borrowed the car last night for what he referred to as a late date. As usual, he had drained the gas tank. This was not all that was amiss, however. Out of the corner of her eye, Kathaleen spotted paraphernalia in the back seat that didn't belong. She didn't dare turn around, afraid of what she might find. She didn't need this extra complication right now. Her immediate concern was to get to a gas station before the car ran out of gas. This would cost her even more time, time that Kathaleen did not have right now.

Kathaleen pulled out of the garage and driveway, turned on her car lights, and pointed the car in the direction of the nearest gas station. She calculated that she would barely make it for her 7:00 a.m. meeting, that is if she could get gas at this station and the roads were driveable on this dark and foggy January morning. No time for Tim Horton's coffee and donuts today. As she approached the gas station and began thinking about the day that lay ahead of her, she came to the conclusion that her heightened anxiety was not due exclusively to being short on time and gas. She also realized that she was not looking forward to her first meeting, or for that matter, to some of the other issues that she knew she would have to deal with today. The 7:00 meeting, though, was her biggest concern right now. The private meeting was being held so early because the parents of the two Asians girls – Kathaleen wasn't sure whether they were from Pakistan or India – did not want anyone to know that they were meeting with the principal. She couldn't understand their desire for secrecy, but nevertheless went along with their request for an early meeting. Apparently, they were blaming the school for the anonymous calls they were receiving. Much to the parents' consternation, the callers were telling them that their teenage daughters were behaving in ways that were considered by the parents to be taboo. The situation itself aside, Kathaleen did not like the man to whom she initially spoke. She felt that he was arrogant and sensed that he treated her with disrespect because of her gender. She also disapproved of the way he was threatening her. This gentleman had told her that he would go to the Director of Education if Kathaleen couldn't solve his problem in short order. Right now she didn't have a strategy for resolving the situation, other than to listen, or at least try to listen, to what they had to say.

Kathaleen's blood pressure went up another notch when she pulled into the gas station. No one seemed to be around. Then it dawned on her that none of the gas stations in the area were likely to be open before 7:00. Kathaleen quickly sized up the situation. She had to make a decision and she had to do it quickly. If she waited for the station to open she would be at least forty minutes late for the meeting, and she anticipated that the parents would respond unsympathetically to her tardiness. On the other hand, Kathaleen had never run out of gas in her trusty Corolla, and her school was only twenty-five miles away. Besides, part of her route took her along uncongested country roads where she could make good time. She decided to go for

it. She pulled out of the gas station, and put her foot to the floor. She had heard somewhere that drivers get the best gas mileage if they drive at moderate speeds. Kathaleen, however, didn't buy this theory. She was convinced that while the car might use more gas at higher speeds, it also covered more ground. Anyway, she was in a hurry and couldn't be bothered at staying within the posted speed limit – not that she ever did at the best of times. She smiled with satisfaction knowing that she had so far this year eluded the police speed traps in the area.

Kathaleen began to feel a little better as she watched the countryside fly by and the first rays of sunlight penetrate the fog and the retreating darkness. At this rate, she was actually going to be a little early. Once again her thoughts turned to her meeting and her school. The situation that gave rise to the parents' wish for a meeting was just one among an infinite number of new and different kinds of situations that Kathaleen grappled with since coming to Althaven last year. The source of many of the challenges that accompanied these situations, she believed, was the incredible diversity in the school and surrounding community. She had never seen so much diversity in one place. At last count, students identified sixty different countries as their places of birth. And this was even not counting those students born in this country whose parents had emigrated from distant lands. Before coming to Althaven, Kathaleen would never have thought that she would have encountered so many religions, languages, modes of dress, interactional styles, temperaments, dietary preferences, and values on countless issues in a single school community. Needless to say, all of this presented her with many new yet demanding challenges – challenges that she sometimes wondered whether or not she welcomed.

The problem for Kathaleen was not the diversity in and of itself. In fact, she found herself fascinated with the many differences that she encountered in her students and in the community. The problem, or at least part of it, revolved around her unfamiliarity with these differences, that is, with many of the student groups that populated her school. Not only did Kathaleen know little about these groups, she discovered that she was not able to understand many of the practices and values that students and parents did display. Like most administrators in the board, Kathaleen was of Anglo heritage. Her four grandparents were of Western or Northern European background, and three of them were born in Canada. She had grown up in a rural Ontario that was very White and European. In contrast, most of the students at Althaven were not of Western European heritage. Rather, they or their parents had emigrated from countries in Asia, the West Indies, Eastern Europe, and Africa. The problem for Kathaleen was that her life experiences and her seasoning as a teacher and administrator had not prepared her to understand and solve many of the diversity-related challenges that arose in her school. At the best of times, she found herself scrambling to learn more about the various groups and situations that she regularly encountered so she would be in a position to make appropriate decisions. But she did not always have the time to dedicate to this kind of research, and she was constantly plagued with doubts about the decisions that she did make. In some ways, Kathaleen longed for the kinds of problems she had been used to facing in her previous schools, problems where her expertise and background would be of use.

The countryside now flew by, and Kathaleen's confidence soared as she neared her destination. Her good spirits quickly vanished, however, as she glanced in the

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

This chapter describes the various educational approaches to diversity that educators have employed over the years. Despite the considerable number of such approaches, certain broad tendencies are apparent. Most of these can be classified as conservative, liberal/pluralist or critical. In what follows, I describe each of these approaches to diversity in education, the associated explanations of student failure, and recommended strategies for success. In each case I trace how, if at all, the perspective enhances inclusion. As will become evident in the pages that follow, some approaches are more consistent with inclusive education than others. The conservative view promotes inclusive practice the least, while critical approaches support it the most. The liberal/pluralist position falls somewhere in between. All three approaches, however, display shortcomings, which I illustrate below. I also document the contemporary challenges to inclusive education. In doing so, I use some of the ideas of more recent approaches to diversity by critical multiculturalists, antiracists and postmodernists. These challenges revolve around globalization, issues of identity and recent conservative opposition to efforts to recognize diversity. Before I move on to these descriptions, I provide a brief and selective history of perceptions of human diversity.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HUMAN DIVERSITY

Views of human diversity that have a bearing on contemporary education and inclusion have a history. They reach back to well beyond 16th and 17th century Europe. It was at this time that what came to be seen as significant differences between and among people began to take on new meanings. From this point on, such differences would occupy the thoughts and words of humanity in new ways. Of the many reasons for this, two stand out. The first is humankind's increased mobility. Advancement in travel technology, and in the shipping industry in particular, made it possible at the time for people to travel longer distances in shorter and more manageable times. The result was that the differences between and among people who lived in different areas of the world became more apparent. This differed from previous eras when people stayed relatively close to their respective birthplaces. And even those who traveled great distances did not appear to give much notice to group characteristics. Shreeve (1994) maintains that neither Marco Polo nor the 14th century Arabian explorer Ibn Battutah seldom thought in these terms. Rarely covering more than twenty-fives miles a day, it never occurred to

them to categorize people in “racial” ways, or at least not in the manner in which the contemporary world does.

These differences also took on greater significance as traditional hierarchies began to break down (Taylor, 1991). Up until 16th and 17th century a European’s station in life and the privileges that accompanied this position were determined at birth. So the son of a nobleman inherited advantages that a son or daughter of a serf could never in their lifetime expect. At this time, however, these long-established traditions were seriously threatened by the new and evolving economic system – a person need not necessarily be of noble birth to profit in the market. Faced with the erosion of these privileges, those of upper class standing clambered to protect this traditional hierarchy by working to ensure that they enjoyed particular advantages in the newly evolving market economy. The establishment of the nation state was one such strategy, although of course there were also other reasons for the rise of the nation state. Such a move provided an ideal legitimizing mechanism for establishing laws that favored the already privileged. So laws regarding land ownership and other resources favored those who already had the means to acquire them over those who did not.

Another strategy in safeguarding these privileges involved highlighting differences of those who were thought to be unworthy others and characterizing the differences associated with them in negative ways. Doing so, the privileged claimed, would provide a justification for treating such individuals in unfair, exploitive, and demeaning ways. These characterizations applied both to those who lived in their midst as well as those more distant others. In this respect, these characterizations had both a “class” and a “race” dimension.¹ The ruling class in feudal Europe and the later so-called bourgeoisie class in industrial Europe sought to protect their privileged positions, in part by promulgating a view of serfs and working class people as simpler and more primitive than themselves. The idea here was that these people did not deserve the same privileges as the upper class because they were somehow lesser human beings than the latter. Mathew Arnold’s characterization of working class people as having no culture, as being “raw and uncivilized,” and as savages, typifies this view (Young, 1995). These same kinds of characterizations also provided the owners of capital a rationale (and supposedly a clear conscience) for enslaving people from different parts of the world, and profiting from their labour. The privileged reasoned that not only was it their right, but also their duty to do as they pleased with people they believed to be “heathens”, “savages” and “poor infidels captivated by the devil” (Rushames, 1962, p. 2).

The idea of “race” and associated value attributions solidified as scientists become involved. In the 18th century, employing what they believed to be scientific and thereby objective methods, scientists established two (supposed) facts about humanity. The first was that humanity was divided into distinct groups they called “races.” The second fact was that each of these races had a different worth. Johann Friedrich Blumenbach was perhaps the most influential of these scientists (Gould, 1994). His theory emphasized the belief that *homo sapiens* had been created in one

¹ Of course, they also applied to gender, but the differential status of men and women at this time was so taken for granted that there was probably little need to justify the treatment of women.

location and then had spread out over the globe. He believed that diversity occurred as groups of people moved out from this place of origin and adapted to different climates and topographies. Nevertheless, Blumenbach did single out one group as being closest to the created ideal, and characterized all others by relative degrees of departure from this archetypal standard. His criterion for identifying this original and ideal group was physical beauty. Not surprisingly, he affirmed his fellow Europeans as the most beautiful, and those from the area of Mount Causasus the most comely of all, hence the designation “Caucasian” (Gould, 1994). At this point, however, Blumenbach faced a problem. His mentor, Carolus Linneaus, had only identified four races, and he needed an additional race to complete the transition from the most attractive races to the least. One side of the equation presented no problem; the line of departure went from the most comely Caucasians, through the intermediary North Americans to the least worthy Asians. The other side of the pyramid, however, needed an additional race to be the intermediary between his ideal Caucasians and the least attractive Africans. He solved this problem by creating a new race – the Malaysians, all in the name of science!

CONSERVATIVE APPROACHES TO EDUCATIONAL DIVERSITY

The so-called scientific research that was based on these erroneous ideas would influence approaches to the education of various groups of students and explanations for their successes and failures. Particularly influential in this respect was the connection that researchers of the time drew between what they believed to be distinct groups and their social aptitudes and cognitive abilities. Researchers were convinced that cognitive abilities were inherent, that is, they were biologically determined. To prove such claims, a number of scientists engaged in a program of research that sought to draw a relationship between brain size and intelligence. Such research, however, has long since been discredited (Gould, 1981; Shreeve, 1994). In fact subsequent analyses revealed that one of the most prominent of these scientists, Ceril Burt, actually fabricated his data (Gould, 1981). This is not the end of this story, however. Despite convincing evidence to the contrary, contemporary social scientists continue to pursue this erroneous connection between “race” and intelligence. Herrnstein and Murray (1994) are just the latest of these misguided social scientists who cling to the idea that there is a fixed connection between biology and social behaviour.

The implications of this conservative ideology for education, however, are not as clear-cut as they may seem. On the one hand, those people who had the prerogative of defining certain groups and individuals as different sought to protect their privileges, in part, by using educational institutions to eliminate what they saw in these different others as threatening. A key strategy in their drive to contain these threatening differences rested with assimilationist educational policies. The idea here was to educate different others in ways that would prompt them to accept certain values, values that they would share with the already privileged. So, for example, the school promoters in 19th century Upper Canada wanted the children of immigrants and the poor to attend school (Prentice, 1977). They believed that education would provide the means through which these young people could be

CHAPTER 3

LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSION: A REVIEW

The previous chapter examined various approaches to diversity. In it I concluded that not all of these approaches were consistent with inclusive educational practice. In this regard, critical perspectives proved to promote inclusive practice the most, while conservative approaches were the least helpful. Liberal/pluralist positions fell somewhere in between these two options. This book, however, is not just about general approaches to education and inclusive practice. It explores the work of administrators. My task in this chapter is to develop an approach to leadership that is consistent with critical approaches to diversity and to inclusive practice. Towards this end, I survey and critique various approaches to leadership. I conclude in the end that administrators interested in pursuing inclusive education will profit most from an emancipatory approach to leadership, an approach that differs markedly from more popular views. The most significant variation is that leadership is conceptualized not as a set of traits or actions associated with a particular individual, but as a communal process.

THE LURE OF LEADERSHIP

The idea and practice of leadership continues to be as popular as it ever was. This preoccupation with leadership and leaders is reflected in the words and actions of politicians, captains of industry, educators, academics and media personalities, among others. Their articles show up regularly in newspapers, magazines, journals and books, just as their speeches and casual conversations win wide audiences. Many practicing executives, managers and administrators read these offerings, others attend seminars and sessions, while those who take what these leadership gurus say seriously may eventually attempt to incorporate recommended forms of leadership into their own practices.

Why are we so preoccupied with leadership? The answer lies, in part, with the deeply held cultural belief (Gronn, 1996; Lakowski, 1999) that certain individuals can help us out, particularly in times of uncertainty or change. We continue to subscribe to the notion that particular men or women who are endowed with special skills have the capacity to act so as to profoundly influence future courses of events. And we continue to hold onto the hope that humanity will profit from the words and deeds of these gifted individuals. On the other hand, we also fear for our future in the absence of these sorts of leaders. Loeb (1994), for example, lamenting the apparent dearth of contemporary leaders, asks "Where have all the leaders gone?" He claims that wherever one goes in business and in government, people are perpetually asking where these unique individuals are. Loeb laments that we can no

longer name larger-than-life-leaders, like De Gaulle, Roosevelt or Churchill, who seemed to arrive on the scene just in time to pull the world through a crisis. For Loeb, the consequences for industry of this lack of leadership are all too real – as the icons of the business world fall, so do their corporations.

Loeb (1994) and others imply that leaders are needed most when there is a crisis in human affairs, when things seem to be slipping out of control, or when rapid changes render current organizational arrangements obsolete. If we accept the notion that leadership is important, then it would seem that some form of leadership is required for our rapidly changing contemporary social landscape. However, it also may be the case that current and accepted leadership practices and approaches are not appropriate for evolving social conditions. As the context for leadership changes, new or different leadership ideas, approaches, concepts and practices may be in order. This is as true for educational institutions as it is for any other sector of our contemporary world. And like these other areas of life, education in the Western world faces conditions that differ from those of fifteen and even ten years ago. Not least among other priorities, leaders of today's schools must work with school communities that continue to display increasing levels of diversity. This chapter outlines an approach to leadership geared to help school communities cope with the demands associated with diversity and to work towards inclusive forms of educational practice. Before moving on to this task, I will first address the meaning of the term leadership.

THE MEANING OF LEADERSHIP

Those who introduced the concept of leadership into the administrative and organizational lexicon did so with the idea that it would eventually be helpful in improving what organizations do. Over the years, however, the term itself has taken on many different meanings (Gronn, 1996; Leithwood, 1999; Yukl, 1994). Those who explore this concept will not always use this term in the same way. Yukl (1994) has assembled a number of different “definitions” of leadership that scholars have developed over the years. Other scholars go so far as to dismiss the concept of leadership as meaningless. Lakomski (1999, p. 36), for example, maintains that the “concept of leadership is without a referent,” suggesting that “there is no natural object of this kind in nature to which leadership refers.” Yet others refer to its vagueness (Leithwood, 1999). Despite the complexities associated with the concept, however, many – but not all – who use the term would probably agree that leadership refers to the ways in which processes of influence work between and among individuals and groups. Yukl (1994, p. 3), for one, maintains that “most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or groups) to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization.”

The differences in conceptions of leadership that are relevant to inclusion revolve around the kinds of relationships among individuals and groups and the nature of the influence processes. Those who write about leadership inevitably make assumptions about how people in organizations relate or should relate to one another.

Approaches to leadership also differ with respect to the ends to which leadership efforts are, or should be, directed. Finally, those who study leadership also vary in their beliefs about the best procedure to improve practice. Some scholars make contributions to practice by making more or less explicit prescriptions for leadership practices or by adopting stances that suggest or outline particular inroads for approaching practice. Other scholars contribute to practice in more indirect ways. These people may look to devise concepts to help us understand leadership and organization outcomes or to conduct empirical studies to help describe the behaviour of people in leadership roles and their impact on others.

Each of the approaches outlined below assumes a position on the various elements of leadership, as the term is commonly conceived. Advocates of managerial/technical, humanistic, transformational and emancipatory forms of leadership all take a position on the relationships among organizational members, the form that influence takes, and the ends to which leadership efforts are directed.¹ They also approach leadership from either an explicitly prescriptive stance or one that attempts to explore leadership from a more neutral position. Some, however, are more appropriate than others for contemporary contexts of diversity and for inclusive education.

MANAGERIAL/TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP

Like assorted other forms of leadership, managerial/technical leadership encompasses a number of different approaches that themselves display some common characteristics. Thus, advocates of the managerial/technical approach (Simon, 1957; Fiedler, 1967; Evan, 1973; Katz & Kahn, 1978) assume that there are unique individuals in formal positions of responsibility who are quite distinct from the people who work under them (Callahan, 1963; Perrow, 1986; Gronn, 1996; Vanderslice, 1988). The division between leader and follower is exclusively a function of an individual's place in the organization. Those who see organizations in this way believe that the superiority that accompanies leaders' formal positions entitles them to act in ways that will ultimately influence their followers and benefit their respective organizations. Vanderslice (1988) goes on to say that this hierarchical view of leadership revolves around the idea that a large part of the leader's role is to behave in a manner that best controls or directs the behaviour of the followers. Those who subscribe to this approach believe, as Gronn (1996) observes, that there is a causal connection between what these leaders do and what eventually happens in organizations.

¹ Each of these types can be considered "ideal types" in the Weberian sense. They represent "pure" forms. As a consequence, none of the examples cited may conform in every respect to the type with which they are identified. They might just as easily display characteristics from two or more of the other forms of leadership. This typology derived very loosely from other reviews of leadership approaches (e.g. Heck & Hallinger, 1996; Leithwood & Duke, 1996; Richmon & Allison, 2003), traditions in social science and knowledge (Habermas, 1971) and traditions of inquiry in the field of educational administration and leadership. The crucial point here is not that this typology has a firmly anchored foundation but that it makes sense to readers, and in doing so, helps them gain insight in the study and practice of leadership in contexts of diversity.